

[104 cont:]

226 Never again during our visit did we come across this type
751 of magic object, which leads us to believe that it does not be-
[177] long to the Guajiro cultural whole, but that it is due rather to
[194] the influence of the mulattoes of the coast who, as is well known,
are extremely superstitious.

*756 Charms used to call spirits. The use of these charms, to
which we have referred on other occasions, is limited to shamans.

778 They use them to facilitate the arrival of their protector spirits
when they are in a curing trance or are carrying out any of the
functions related to their status. Up to the present we have not
arrived at a satisfactory explanation of their influence on the
spirits, but we might now bring together the few data we do have.

[772] One of the female shamans who served us as informant and who
came from the Sierra [de] Jarara possessed charms to attract her
spirits. She explained to us that as those spirits are assistants,
some to young shamans, some to old ones, the charms to facilitate
the arrival of their spirits are also of two classes: for young
shamans and the other for old ones.

[847] The charm is made from the leaf of a plant called in Guajiro
mordoo, which is found in abundance on Itojoro Hill. A woman
expert in such articles makes them there [105] by grinding the
leaves of the plant to a paste and shaping this into a rounded form
which she keeps in a small bag of red thread. The larger ones
are reserved for the older shamans, and the others, combined with
some of the former, are for the younger.

778 The guard or gualé. The guard or gualé, difficult to find at
781 present, is a kind of idol made from solid gold or silver and of
[325] which only a few examples exist as they are no longer made. This
[522] small idol is an anthropomorphic representation in fetal position,
and it does not seem to be an autochthonous product of the
[173] Guajiro as they themselves assert that these idols come from their
distant ancestors, by which they mean the Arhuaco of the Sierra
Nevada de Santa Marta.

This fetish is known sometimes by the name Mareiwa, a
divinity or spirit similar to the idea of God but which appears to
be nothing else than the spirit of Rain, as we shall see further
ahead (cf. "Mareiwa and Wanuri").

INNOCENCE AND THE FERTILITY DANCE 119

On two occasions I went out with some hunters who had 778
 hunting *contra*s. Two had talismans for hares; these were 224
 small pellets fastened to the leather shield that protects the 789
 arm against the bow string. The pellets were shaped like
 rabbit's excrement and contained a herb the leaves of which
 resembled rabbit's ears and which the so-called rabbits
 were fond of! Another man had a deer *contra* prepared
 from a creeper. It resembled deer's droppings.

The hunters were quite convinced that the *contra* would
 give them good hunting, and that by its power their game
 would be unable to escape them. Thus those *contra* were
 doubly effective. On neither occasion, however, did we get
 anything, much to the consternation of the hunters. I think
 they assumed that my presence had prevented the charms
 working, and they were astounded when I bought them.

Of other talismans there was one intended to help its 778
 owner win races. This consisted of some rattling fruits to 789
 tie beside the horse's ear. There was a *contra* for warriors
 called *ramla*, which gave its bearer courage and made him
 invulnerable. Another, which was very expensive, was said
 to give the possessor luck in business and gradually make
 him rich. Having become rich, he could then purchase the
 most expensive charm of all, that which would bring him
 respect and power. This latter was strictly personal: an
 outsider could be harmed by seeing it, especially a thief, and
 it was not effective except in the hands of its rightful
 owner. It was contained inside several small bags, one
 within the other, and what was inside the innermost one was
 known only to the *plache* who prepared it. In the talisman
 that brought wealth there were supposed to be links of gold,
 the power of which lay in the spells spoken over them.
 Similarly pearls and little figures made of coconut over
 which the wise women had spoken spells served as amulets. 789
 Amongst other things they protect the wearer against the 797
 evil eye, belief in which the Indians had evidently adopted 792
 from the Spanish-Moorish superstitions of their conquerors.
 You can find too the small carved hands that are so typically
 Moorish, and the most powerful means of averting the evil
 eye. Yet another is more in the negro style. The skulls of